

KSBW-TV, Hearst-Argyle Television, Inc.FCC Broadcast Localism Initiatives
Comments
November 3, 2004

Since we began broadcasting over 50 years ago, KSBW-TV has committed to providing the Central Coast with in-depth news coverage and public service. Our commitment is to be number one in our service and quality to our viewers. To that end, our goal is to continue to grow as the overwhelming local source for news, information, public service and entertainment. The only way to achieve that is by meeting the needs of our community.

Local television news deals with problems and solutions, with public policy and public affairs, emergency weather or earthquake information, the danger of a wildfire, or the urgency of a local missing child, and KSBW-TV is no exception.

We also offer a way to get the word out to a huge number of people to support a community event like: the Rodeo or Airshow, "Share Your Holiday" for the Salvation Army, the Children's Miracle Network with Salinas Valley Memorial Hospital, or "Success By 6," the early childhood initiative we do in conjunction with the United Way organizations in Santa Cruz County and Monterey County. By the way, the initiation of this early childhood initiative marks the first time that the United Way organizations in our two counties have worked together on a joint project.

Cable can't do it; satellite can't do it; neither can pay TV or a national website, but for over 50 years KSBW's success has been based on making it local for our viewers. It doesn't matter if someone watches the station on a small portable B & W screen or a huge flat screen, or if the signal is free over-the-air, pay for cable or satellite service, ultimately we all share local TV and it is in all of our best interest to meet the public needs.

Our television station has always pushed to innovate: the Central Coast's first television station; the first station to broadcast in color; the first with live news-gathering technology; the only Central Coast station with an automated weather network in local schools (WeatherNet 8; and in November 2002, the first to offer high definition broadcasts on KSBW-DT (channel 10). We are honored to be #1 with viewers in all day-parts and in all newscasts and #1 with advertisers in providing the most robust platforms (TV and internet) for their local messages.

Local News

KSBW is overwhelming chosen as the #1 TV station by Central Coast viewers in the latest Nielsen ratings. KSBW offers the only local news and weather in the mornings and has three time higher ratings for our morning news than any of our competitors' evening newscasts. We provide 4 ½ hours of local news a day, Monday - Friday: morning, mid-day, evening and 11 p.m. We also offer two hours

of news on the weekend. In all, KSBW provides a 24 hour news operation which broadcasts 24 and a half hours of local news per week.

When an opportunity arises, we will assess, evaluate, and implement change. For example, we expanded our sunrise newscast from one hour to two hours and implemented updates during the expanded Today Show from 7 a.m. - 10 a.m.

KSBW's parent company, Hearst, has offered editorial opinion for over 116 years in newspapers and magazines, and 50 years on television. While this has not been a fifty-year tradition here, KSBW established its Editorial Board in 1999, publishing a weekly editorial for the past five years. Our station's promise is "coverage you can count on" and we think an element of that promise, and an important responsibility for any leading news organization, is to offer editorial comment.

Editorials are not part of the news, but they are part of our commitment to serve the public. They are presented each week following Action News at Six on Fridays and Saturdays, and Sundays, Action News at 11 p.m. on Sundays, and at 6:30 a.m. on Monday, during Action News at Sunrise. In addition to presenting them on-air, the text of the editorials can be found on our website.

An example of local issues regularly covered in news and followed by a subsequent editorial include the financial woes of the Natividad Medical Center, its potential closure and impact on health care, local measures and propositions, the on-going controversy surrounding the Board of Directors of the Monterey Peninsula Unified School District, its embattled Superintendent and school closures, rising community college fees, medical marijuana, the General Plan and even, the FCC's localism hearing held in Monterey.

We launched our local news and information website, www.theksbwchannel.com in June 2001. Since that time, marketing research shows that our website is preferred by 41% of the local audience, exceeding the combined preference of all five other Central Coast news websites, combined. (Monterey Herald, Santa Cruz Sentinel, Salinas Californian, and KION and KCBA).

We believe our success is attributable to offering a product that does indeed meet the needs of viewers. When they click onto our website they will find Action News 8 top stories, the latest headlines, be it local, regional, national or international, desktop alerts for breaking news, and weather, information on public affairs programming, job and internship opportunities, editorials, Success By 6 project information, and even the posting of quarterly FCC reports and EEO filings. These are just some of the examples, for there is much more...be it health news, entertainment, programming, etc.

Local Public Affairs

Feedback @ Five is an engaging half-hour show hosted and produced by our Community Affairs Director. It is the only public affairs program on the Central Coast and it focuses on local community issues, highlighting organizations and individuals.

Recent programming included an examination of California's "Safely Surrender Baby Law" following the case of a local infant abandoned in a porta-potty in a agricultural field shortly after birth; balancing growth, affordable housing while protecting the natural beauty of the environment with two leading and sometimes polarizing non-profit organizations; measures & propositions in the

2004 election; an interview with youth from the Boys and Girls Club, who participated in an international arts exchange program in Japan; and finally, an honest and unflinching look at the pervasive gang violence in our community with leading law enforcement officials, political leaders, community activists, and gang prevention specialists.

Emergency Programming

Since the acquisition of KSBW-TV by Hearst-Argyle, Inc. the company has made substantial capital improvements to provide the best quality of service to viewers. These improvements include an investment of millions of dollars for a new analog transmitter in 1999, a new HDTV transmitter in 2002, as well as, a new WeatherWatch 8 computer system, new newsroom computer system, new graphic and editing equipment. In addition, the station provides Amber Alerts and EBS warnings when deemed necessary.

KSBW's news department routinely provides live and on-the-scene coverage of emergencies, weather, traffic, and crime that impacts the community. There have been times when the station has played an integral role in getting the "word out" and actually making a direct positive impact on the outcome of a situation. A prime example is offered below:

Nearly one week before Thanksgiving 2001, it became apparent that some Central Coast residents would go without food during the holiday, unless the community came together to turn things around quickly. Normally, they could rely upon the Salvation Army for relief, but at that particular moment, the Salvation Army Corp was in need of help as well.

On Thursday, November 15, the Salvation Army called KSBW, and asked for help. The Corp was trying to fill Thanksgiving baskets and distribute food for the needy and by that day, their food pantries were completely bare. An officer of the Corp called KSBW and asked if we could "get the word out" that they desperately needed donations. On Friday, November 16, KSBW's General Manager and staff members met to explore the best way to maximize the power of the station and its resources to meet this demand.

In light of the communities generous response to September 11 funds, a setback in the local economy, resulting in layoffs in the tourism and hospitality industries, and the fact that we would be going back on the air four weeks later asking viewers to support "Share Your Holiday," our annual Christmas holiday drive benefiting the Salvation Army, we were uncertain how much of a response we would get to support this urgent need.

It was decided that KSBW would hold an emergency food drive the following Monday, November 19, giving the Salvation Army just two days, to distribute Thanksgiving donations.

That Friday, staff members worked diligently to establish six collection sites for the twelve-hour drive. We immediately promoted the food drive on our website and during our evening newscast that evening and subsequent newscasts that weekend.

On Monday, November 19, we went on the air during each of our newscast and asked viewers for their support. The drive began at 7 a.m. at each collection site and ended at 7 p.m. By the end of the day, Central Coast viewers contributed an astounding 13 tons of non-perishable food items, almost 1,000 turkeys and \$20,000.

The combination of the power of the station, the generosity of viewers, and the urgent need resulted in an unprecedented amount of donations in a short period of time. The result is that every single person who asked for a Thanksgiving Food basket was given one.

In January 2002, KSBW-TV was presented with a "Special Award of Recognition" by the Salvation Army to acknowledge the station's emergency food drive, "Share Your Thanksgiving."

Creating or Selecting Programming

KSBW uses local standards in selecting all programming for the station. The best syndicated programs available are broadcast on our air, including "Oprah" and "Dr. Phil." NBC provides top quality national news and entertainment. On occasion, we have locally pre-empted NBC programming which we have found inconsistent with local community standards. KSBW also produces the only weekly, local public affairs half-hour: "Feedback at Five" (detailed in Public Affairs section above). KSBW airs this program on Sundays at 5 pm, just prior to NBC News.

Political Programming

It is our responsibility to provide viewers with as much information as possible to help them make informed decisions. To that end, KSBW and 24 other Hearst-Argyle television stations across our country launched "COMMITMENT 2000" in 2000.

COMMITMENT 2000 was our pledge to provide the most comprehensive news coverage of national, state, and local campaigns. This initiative on Action News includes daily campaign reports, and special segments, which will review the accuracy and truthfulness of candidates' broadcast, print, and Internet advertising. The initiative continues on our web site, where we provide links to candidates' position statements. In addition, our Editorial Board reviews selected election measures and propositions and shares our opinion with viewers in the weekly editorial.

KSBW and Hearst-Argyle Television, was the only station group in America to win the Walter Cronkite Award from the Annenberg School at USC for excellence in political coverage during election periods in 2000 and 2002 with our "Commitment 2000" and "Commitment 2002." Our commitment to provide viewers with political coverage continued through California's tumultuous gubernatorial recall and this year's historical presidential campaign with "Commitment 2004."

Civic, Cultural and Other Community-Responsive Programming

In total, KSBW contributes over \$2 million a year in PSA airtime and public service project support. We also offer a daily community calendar offering information about local events and organizations. The community calendar airs during the market's #1 rated local newscasts.

Station Participation in Community Activities

For 18 years, KSBW has partnered with the Salvation Army to raise money, clothing, food, toys and blankets for needy families in the tri-county region. We broadcast live from seven locations over 12 hours on a Friday in December. Each year, we have increased money and other contributions, sometimes by a whopping 50%.

In 1999, we took over the Children's Miracle Network, partnering with Salinas Valley Memorial Hospital. The original local television partners of this event had seen single digit growth for several years, peaking around \$300,000 per year. KSBW has provided double-digit growth for five years straight and increased annual money raised by almost 200%.

KSBW on-air personalities support community organizations through personal appearances, guest-speaking or emceeding events. KSBW's President and General Manager is an active board participant of several community organizations. KSBW's Community Affairs Manager offers educational tours to local school groups and organizations, presents media presentations to non-profit organizations, hosts a class session for Leadership Monterey Peninsula, and oversees our internship program for college students.

Theresa Wright
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